THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY's SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE SOCIETY OF GENTLEMEN EDUCATED IN THE KING's SCHOOL THERE, ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 26. 1784. BEING THE DAY OF THEIR ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY'S

SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE

SOCIETY OF GENTLEMEN

EDUCATED IN THE

KING'S SCHOOL THERE,

ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 1761,

BEING

THE DAY OF THEIR

ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

8

THE CHARACTER OF TRUE WISDOM, AND THE MEANS OF ATTAINING IT.

694.g.1.
4

A

SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST,

CANTERBURY,

BEFORE THE

SOCIETY OF GENTLEMEN

EDUCATED IN THE

KING's SCHOOL,

ON THURSDAY, AUG. 26. 1784.

BEING

THE DAY OF THEIR ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

By GEORGE HORNE, D.D.
DEAN OF CANTERBURY,
AND PRESIDENT OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN
COLLEGE, OXFORD.

OXFORD:
PRINTED FOR D. PRINCE AND J. COOKE:
SOLD ALSO BY J. F. AND C. RIVINGTON, AND
G. ROBINSON IN LONDON; AND MESS. FLACTON,
SMITH, AND SIMMONS IN CANTERBURY.
MDCC LXXXIV.

THE CHARACTER OF TRUE WISDOM, AND
THE MEANS OF ATTAINING IT.

A

SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST,

CANTERBURY,

BEFORE THE

SOCIETY OF GENTLEMEN

EDUCATED IN THE

KING'S SCHOOL,

ON THURSDAY, AUG. 23, 1789,

BEING

THE DAY OF THEIR ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

BY GEORGE HORNE, D.D.
DEAN OF CANTERBURY,
AND PRESIDENT OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN
COLLEGE, OXFORD.

OXFORD:
PRINTED FOR D. PRINCE AND J. COOKE:
SOLD ALSO BY J. F. AND C. RIVINGTON, AND
G. ROBINSON IN LONDON, AND MESS. BRACTON,
SMITH, AND SIMMONS IN CANTERBURY.
MDCCLXXXIV.

TO THE

WORTHY AND TRULY RESPECTABLE

SOCIETY OF GENTLEMEN

EDUCATED IN THE

KING'S SCHOOL AT CANTERBURY,

THIS DISCOURSE,

PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS INSCRIBED BY THEIR FAITHFUL

AND MOST OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PROV. IV. 7.

WISDOM IS THE PRINCIPAL THING, THEREFORE GET WISDOM: AND WITH ALL THY GETTING, GET UNDERSTANDING.

THE ſage inſtructor of the world, from the eminence on which Providence had placed him, ſurveys mankind. Diſcontented with themſelves, and their preſent condition, he beholds them engaged in the purſuit of ſomething that ſtill flies before them. Pleaſure, wealth, and power, appear in their view, and ſolicit their attention. Grieved to ſee time miſpent in queſt of things periſhable, and labour loſt on that which either may not be obtained, or, when obtained, may diſappoint in enjoyment all the hopes excited by expectation, he raiſes his voice, and wiſhes it to be heard to the ends of the earth. He calls men off from a fruitleſs chaſe after objects attained with difficulty, and poſſeſſed without ſatisfaction; he points out one, adequate to all their efforts; one, in the purſuit of which no time can

be miſpent, no labour can be loſt; one, which preſents itſelf a fair mark, to be always hit by the quick eye, and the ſteady hand; one that may be ſurely gained by genius and diligence, and when gained, is productive of pleaſure, riches, and honour; pleaſure, which fadeth not away; riches, which none can take from the happy poſſeſſor; and the honour which cometh from God only. SOLOMON found, if men were diſpoſed to be contented with any thing, it was that with which they never ſhould be contented—their ignorance. He exhorts them to LEARN. "Wiſdom "is the principal thing: therefore, get wiſdom; and "with all thy getting, get underſtanding."

The ſubject will beſt be laid before you, in its ſeveral branches, by conſidering, WHAT it is we are enjoined to acquire; HOW we are to acquire it; and WHY we are to acquire it.

FIRST, then, we will conſider the nature of that, which we are ſo earneſtly enjoined to acquire.

It would be tedious, and it is needleſs, critically to diſcuſs the ſignification, and nicely to trace the ſhades which diſcriminate the meaning of the different words employed

employed in the book of Proverbs; ſuch as, "wiſdom, "underſtanding, knowlege, prudence, diſcretion," and the reſt. They ſeem often to be uſed promiſcuouſly. So far, at leaſt, as relates to our preſent purpoſe, and the inſtitution which is the occaſion of our aſſembling at this time, they may certainly be regarded as terms nearly ſynonymous, and intended to convey the idea now generally expreſſed by the word, LEARNING. The wiſdom of SOLOMON, we know, extended itſelf on every ſide; it was converſant in matters phyſical and theological, natural and artificial: it inveſtigated and ſtated the duties and offices of man, political, domeſtic, and perſonal: it contemplated him in the ſeveral relations and employments of life, and preſcribed the conduct reſpectively proper in each. And this ſurely is true wiſdom; this is the end of all learning. Philoſophy, the reſult of ſagacity, reading, and experience, lays down rules and maxims; hiſtory furniſhes examples; and the ſyſtem of nature, with the inventions and improvements of art, ſupplies images and illuſtrations.

A diſtinction has been made between divine and human learning, and much has been written upon it. The former has by ſome been magnified to the con-

tempt and excluſion of the latter, as if that ought not to be brought into the ſanctuary; as if any great quantity of it were not only uſeleſs, but prejudicial; as if ſcience were the death of goodneſs, and ignorance indeed the mother of devotion. On the other hand, there are, who pretty plainly intimate, that they think the name of learning due only to that which we ſtile human; religion, in their opinion, being calculated to engage the attention of none but thoſe, whoſe abilities qualify them not for ſcholars. In the firſt of theſe repreſentations there is a want of judgement; in the ſecond, of piety. The two ſpecies of learning differ; but they differ as the MEANS do from the END. Were there no divine learning, human learning would loſe great part of it's value: limited to the preſent life, it muſt terminate on the confines of the grave. And had we no human learning, we ſhould not be able to attain to that which is divine. The days of inſpiration have been long ſince at an end. God has ceaſed to communicate immediately the treaſures of wiſdom and knowlege to any man. Modern pretenſions to ſuch communications betray ſome fault either in the hearts or heads of thoſe who make them. Theſe treaſures muſt be ſought for, with the bleſſing of God upon our endeavours, in the ordinary

ordinary way. All the divine learning upon earth is contained in the books of the Old and New Teſtament, which are written in Hebrew and Greek. Thoſe languages therefore, with the Latin, muſt be ſtudied; and the ſtudy of them falls within the department of human learning.

Enough, perhaps it will be urged, may be gathered from tranſlations, for all the purpoſes required. But to whom are we indebted for tranſlations, unleſs to thoſe who by good and ſufficient learning became qualified for the work? And as they, however worthy and able, were yet very far from infallible, it will frequently happen, in points of difficulty, that we can neither ſufficiently eſtabliſh our own faith, nor confute the arguments of the adverſary, without recurring to the originals. The adverſary, to ſerve his turn, will recur to them: and what will become of us, if we are not able to follow him?

The hiſtory of the people of God cannot be underſtood, without taking with us that of pagan ſtates, particularly of the Aſſyrian, Perſian, Grecian, and Roman empires. An exact acquaintance with what has been paſſing in the world, ſince the extinction of the

the laſt, cannot be diſpenſed with in a commentator on the prophecies, particularly thoſe in the Revelation. To adjuſt the ſituation of places, and the ſucceſſion of times, we muſt call to our aſſiſtance the ſciences of geography, chronology, and aſtronomy. Nor can the proportions of the temple and its furniture, deſcribed in the books of Kings and Chronicles, and afterward referred to by Ezekiel and St. John, be well comprehended and aſcertained, without ſomething of mathematics and mechanics. Thus neceſſary is a knowlege of languages and ſciences to interpret the letter of Scripture, the ſource of doctrines and precepts, the foundation of all improvements moral and ſpiritual: and they muſt ever be the beſt interpreters, who have the largeſt ſhare of it. The advantage of a ſuperior ſkill in the Greek language, as exerciſed on paſſages in the New Teſtament, and the early eccleſiaſtical writers, has been eminently diſplayed in a controverſy now ſubſiſting, the ſubject of which is of the higheſt importance.

Leſs indeed of human learning was needed by the clergy, when the world around them had none; as was the caſe in the dark ages preceding the Reformation. To the clergy, however, of thoſe very ages are unbelievers

unbelievers indebted for the preſervation of that learning, which, ſince the Reformation, they have employed in vain againſt Chriſtianity. From the clergy in modern times have proceeded nine in ten of the books written to facilitate the progreſs of literature, and diſſeminate every ſpecies of it through the world *. Enemies to falſe philoſophy, they have ever proved themſelves the friends and promoters of that which is true. Yet a certain author having very innocently mentioned "a philoſophical divine," as a character that might be ſuppoſed to exiſt, without any contradiction implied, the hiſtorian of the Roman empire is pleaſed to repreſent ſuch a ſuppoſed being as a STRANGE CENTAUR, † a compoſition abſurd and monſtrous, half man and half brute. According to his own ideas, however, the repreſentation may be juſt enough; for a philoſopher, as we have too much reaſon to apprehend, in HIS acceptation of the word, is an unbeliever; a divine is (and let us hope, will always continue to be) a believer. Wiſdom, it ſeems, was born with the infidel, and will die with him. We will take the liberty, notwithſtanding, to ſay — becauſe it is true — that whatever learning may at any time have been brought

* See the late Dr. JORTIN's admirable Charge, upon this ſubject, at the end of his Sermons.

† Vol. II. P. 369.

to

to the attack, there has never hitherto been found a deficiency of it for the defence of religion; neither will there be found any ſuch deficiency, we truſt, in time to come, while our ſchools and univerſities (chiefly under the management and direction of clergymen) ſhall continue to exiſt and flouriſh. From conſidering the nature of that wiſdom we are in the text exhorted to acquire, this leads us to beſtow ſome reflections,

SECONDLY, on the beſt method of acquiring it.

Learning is that which may be learned. As wiſdom is not communicated by inſpiration, ſo neither is it born with us. We come into the world without principles of any kind, becauſe without ideas of any kind. This opinion was long controverted, as being thought to militate againſt religion. But the apprehenſion appears to have been groundleſs. The doctrine is eſtabliſhed, and religion has received no detriment.

It is ſtill, nevertheleſs, imagined, that a man may make wonderful diſcoveries by the exerciſe of his own powers. But the firſt ſtep in the proceſs has been ſometimes unaccountably overlooked. It has been forgotten, that thoſe powers muſt be elicited and formed

by

by cultivation; that every man muſt be taught by ſome one how to uſe them, or that he will diſcover nothing. A truth, when it has been propoſed and explained to us, appears clear and evident; all the truths contained in the propoſitions of Euclid appear ſo: but ſurely it follows not, that, without information, we ſhould have diſcovered them, or have once thought concerning them. This is a fallacy, by which mankind of late have been greatly miſled. No inſtance can be produced, from Adam to the preſent hour, of a ſingle human being, brought up apart from all inſtructors, who ever ſpoke or reaſoned. The ſtate indeed is unnatural, and one into which man cannot fall, but by accident. In the common courſe of things, Providence has been pleaſed to ordain, that he ſhould be born in ſociety, and have thoſe about him, who never fail to teach him as much as they themſelves know; their language, and the notions current among them. Theſe he learns; and if be he taught no more, he knows no more.

Our countrymen ſent, in queſt of a new continent, to viſit the extremities of the old ones, and the diſtant iſles of the South Sea, have returned with accounts, which confirm what has been ſaid, and may ſerve to

convince us, that "man is born," as the Scripture expreſſes it, "like a wild aſſes colt;" * and, without education, will continue ſuch; that he is born with capabilities only, and is in reality what he is made by inſtruction. Theſe accounts ſhould produce in us a ſentiment of pity for our fellow creatures, whoſe condition is ſo truly deplorable; and one at the ſame time of gratitude to our heavenly Father, who has caſt our lot in a fairer ground. Some modern philoſophers ſeem to think the rocks of Patagonia, and the deſerts of New Zealand, to be the only ſchools in which human nature can be ſtudied to advantage. But ſurely we might as well expect a ſtatuary to accompliſh himſelf in his art, by looking all day at a block of marble, becauſe out of that block a ſtatue may be formed. Shall we judge of a plant, by contemplating the ſeed from which it is to ſpring? No! let us view the tree, it's root fixed in the earth, and drawing moiſture from beneath; it's trunk fully grown, it's branches expanded, and drinking in the dew of heaven from above; the whole inveſted with it's foliage as a beautiful garment, and crowned with it's fruit in the ſeaſon. Let us not frame our ideas of human nature by ſurveying an infant, or a ſavage.

* Job xi. 12.

Shew

Shew us the man completely formed and perfected by a liberal, a learned, and a religious education.

From the mountains of Switzerland a voice has been heard, proclaiming, that we are all miſtaken; that to teach (in matters of religion and morality) is to prejudice; and therefore, infuſe, ſays this philoſopher, no principles into the minds of youth; let them adopt their own, when they come to years of diſcretion.

But ſtill, it is an indiſputable fact, that men muſt learn: and they who do not learn betimes, will learn with far more difficulty, when advanced in years. The ſoil ſtiffens and hardens by continuing untilled. The ground muſt be broken up, and good ſeed muſt be ſown, by him who expects to ſee vallies covered over with corn, at the time of harveſt. Weeds and thiſtles only will be the ſpontaneous and unhappy produce. If children are not early conducted into the paths of truth and virtue, they will be found, at a maturer age, in thoſe of error and vice. We cannot, I am afraid, prevail upon the world, the fleſh, and the devil, to ſtand neuter, during the experiment; an experiment which whoever ſhall make once,

without pretending to the ſpirit of prophecy, we may venture to predict, will find no encouragement to make it again. The truth is, we muſt teach children the beſt we can, while they are young, leaving them to alter and correct afterwards, if they ſhall ſee occaſion. The nature of the thing admits of no other method conſiſtent with the dictates of reaſon and common ſenſe.

Inſtruction being thus neceſſary, we are to conſider through what hands it may be moſt advantageouſly conveyed. Through thoſe, perhaps it will be ſaid, of the parents. One ſhould certainly imagine ſo, at firſt ſight. But then, all parents are not able to inſtruct, having not been themſelves ſufficiently inſtructed. Thoſe of them who are able, may not be willing to ſubmit to the taſk; while many, both able and willing, cannot find leiſure from their neceſſary buſineſs, to undertake it. The fault of Mr. Locke's treatiſe is, that it ſuppoſes none of theſe caſes to happen, but that a father ſhall always be at liberty to take care of his ſon's education. The ſame fault is chargeable on the plan of a very ſenſible and agreeable inſtructreſs of a neighbouring kingdom. With great force of genius, and goodneſs of heart,

ſhe

ſhe deſcribes two perſons of noble birth as giving up the world, and retiring, for a courſe of years, from public life, that they might devote their time and fortune to the education of their children. * Undoubtedly, the deſign is praiſe-worthy. They were excellently well employed. Would to God, that many of their rank were ſo employed, in every kingdom upon earth. But all cannot do it; the ſcheme can never become general.

There is, beſides, another difficulty in the way. The partiality and fondneſs of the tutor, when that tutor is a father, may often do the pupil an injury, the effects of which will go with him through life. To prevent this, the Spartans, by a law of the ſtate, took children, at a certain age, out of the hands of their parents, and placed them under other maſters. The Hebrews had their ſchools of the prophets, the Greeks and Romans their academies and gymnaſia; and ſince the revival of learning in theſe latter days, the weſtern world has abounded with ſchools and univerſities; of which, without incurring the charge of ſelf adulation, we may truly ſay, none have exceeded thoſe in our own country.

* THEODORE ET ADELE, par M. la Compteſſe de GENLIS.

In

In a public education, the means and inſtruments neceſſary for the acquiſition of learning are poſſeſſed in a more full and complete manner. The maſter can give his time and his thoughts wholly to the work. Conſtant and long experience confers a degree of ſkill not otherwiſe to be attained. A ſpirit of emulation is excited in the ſcholar, who goes on with more ſprightlineſs and alacrity in the company of his ſchool-fellows, forgetting thoſe that are behind, and preſſing forward to thoſe who are before, with the determination of a Cæſar, that nothing is yet done, while any thing remains to be done. A regular ſucceſſion of buſineſs at ſtated times inures him to live by rule, and forbids him to be idle; while the diſcipline by which it is enforced, renders him healthy and hardy in mind and body. By being put ſo ſoon to manage and buſtle for himſelf, he is prepared for the world into which he muſt enter, and in which he muſt paſs his days: the various tempers and diſpoſitions of his numerous companions bring him acquainted with thoſe of mankind, among whom he is to paſs them: and he forms connections, which, by baniſhing ſelfiſhneſs, by exchanging offices of friendſhip, by mutual aſſiſtance and communication of ſtudies, as well as in many other

other ways, contribute towards his paſſing them with pleaſure and emolument. If all who are engaged in the ſuperintendence of our public ſeminaries could only beſtow equal attention on the learning and morals of thoſe under their care, ſo that they might go forth (and ſuch, you will all bear me witneſs, have lately gone forth from hence) good MEN as well as good SCHOLARS, the diſpute between the patrons of public and private education would be, perhaps, in great meaſure, at an end.

Reſpecting the method of ſchool inſtruction at preſent in uſe amongſt us, it is one which has been long tried, and found ſucceſsful; witneſs thoſe great and ſhining characters, formed under it's auſpices, which adorn our annals; nor have its adverſaries yet been able to propoſe another, liable, upon the whole, to fewer objections.

The obſervations made by an excellent writer on the plan propoſed by the great Milton are too valuable not to be recited to you upon the preſent occaſion.

"The purpoſe of Milton, as it ſeems, was to teach
"ſomething more ſolid than the common literature

"of

" of Schools, by reading thoſe authors that treat of " phyſical ſubjects, ſuch as the Georgic and aſtrono- " mical treatiſes of the ancients. But the truth is, " that the knowlege of external nature, and of the " ſciences which that knowlege requires or includes, " is not the great or the frequent buſineſs of the " human mind. Whether we provide for action or " converſation, whether we wiſh to be uſeful or " pleaſing, the firſt requiſite is the religious and moral " knowlege of right and wrong: the next is an " acquaintance with the hiſtory of mankind, and with " thoſe examples which may be ſaid to embody truth, " and prove by events the reaſonableneſs of opinions. " Prudence and juſtice are virtues of all times, and " of all places; we are perpetually moraliſts, but we " are geometricians only by chance. Our intercourſe " with intellectual nature is neceſſary; our ſpecu- " lations upon matter are voluntary and at leiſure. " Phyſical knowlege is of ſuch rare emergence, " that one man may know another half his life, " without being able to eſtimate his ſkill in hydro- " ſtatics, or aſtronomy; but his moral and prudential " character immediately appears. Thoſe authors there- " fore are to be read at Schools, that ſupply moſt " axioms of prudence, moſt principles of moral truth,

and

"and moſt materials for converſation: and theſe "purpoſes are beſt anſwered by poets, orators, and "hiſtorians." *

Some have thought, that as we are now furniſhed with tranſlations of the antient claſſical authors, we may ſpare ourſelves the trouble of learning their languages.—Were the queſtion only concerning matters of fact, it might be deemed perhaps of little importance to conſider by what means we come at the knowlege of them, ſo that we do but obtain the truth; though, by the way, whether in particular inſtances we have obtained it, can often only be known (as was obſerved before in the caſe of the Scriptures) by conſulting the originals. But there is much more in the matter. The writers of Greece and Rome are our maſters in ſtyle and compoſition; with relation to which, the ſpirit of every piece will evaporate in the tranſfuſion. Next in value to knowlege, is the mode of communicating it with eaſe and propriety. They who have ſtudied the beſt writers of antiquity with this view, will always themſelves be the beſt writers in any other language. When theſe ſhall ceaſe to be regarded as

* Dr. JOHNSON in his Life of MILTON, P. 142.

our models, elegant ſimplicity and manly energy will give place to a falſe glare of affectation and refinement: looſe and licentious tenets will be tricked out in the meretricious garb of falſe eloquence. A vitiated taſte in writing, like that which preceded the decline and downfal of the Roman empire, will precede our own. Tacitus and Seneca will be imitated, rather than Cæſar and Cicero: epithet, point, and antitheſis, will prevail; and we ſhall prepare for ſlavery, by "babbling "a dialect of France."

Nothing could tend more to accelerate a cataſtrophe of this kind, than the adoption of that ſyſtem of foppery and immorality recommended by a late noble author, enamoured, almoſt to diſtraction, of the language and manners of our neighbours upon the continent. Learning and religion would then no longer make a part in the education of our youth. One would be baniſhed under the notion of pedantry, the other excluded by the name of ſuperſtition. Travel and a knowlege of the world, it ſeems, may ſupply the place of both. To know the world, is doubtleſs expedient; in ſome circumſtances, neceſſary. But a man ſhould know many other things before he enters upon that ſtudy, or he will do well not to enter upon it at all.

Let

Let him lay in a ſtock, and that no moderate one, of uſeful learning, and ſound principles, ere he ſet out upon his travels; or he will be little the better for having ſeen the world, though the world may be ſomewhat the merrier for having ſeen him. If he go out an ignoramus, he will come home a profligate, with the atheiſt ingrafted upon the blockhead. As to the buſineſs of the GRACES—before the gloſs can be given, a ſubſtance muſt be prepared to receive it; and ſolid bodies take the brighteſt poliſh.

From what has been ſaid, you will perhaps be induced to think, that in times like theſe, and in a matter of ſuch importance, projects of innovation are dangerous things. We know what we are to loſe: let us be well informed what we are to gain; leſt we ſhould be led to exchange an old ſyſtem with ſome defects, for a new one with many more; defects which are of little conſequence, for defects which are of very great conſequence indeed to the general ſtate of learning, and the conſtitution of our country. Reformation was the word, in the laſt century; and one was at length effected, which ſwept away ſchools and univerſities, with the government civil and eccleſiaſtical. The revenues allotted to the ſupport of

cathedrals, and theſe their appendages, were ſeized, with a view to AUGMENT THE SMALLER LIVINGS. But mark the event—When the eſtates were ſold, the preſbyterian miniſters, who had taken poſſeſſion of the livings, and expected the augmentation, were told, to their utter aſtoniſhment, that the money was wanted, TO SUPPORT PUBLIC CREDIT. It was wanted, and it was applied accordingly *—All was then overwhelmed by a deluge of enthuſiaſm, and illiterate fanaticiſm. The deluge which now threatens us is one of another kind, but not a whit leſs formidable.

Thus much for the wiſdom we are exhorted to acquire, and the method of acquiring it. A few words ſhall be ſaid, and they ſhall be but few, in the

THIRD and laſt place, upon the advantages attending ſuch acquiſition, to the individual himſelf, and to the community.

To the individual, wiſdom is indeed, as SOLOMON properly ſtyles it, "the principal thing." The ſeat of

* See WARNER's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, II. 580. COLLIER, II. 848. NALSON, II. 291.

it's

it's reſidence is in the nobleſt part of the human compoſition; and that noble part it renders ſtill more noble. What elſe gives to man the ſuperiority over brutes; to angels over man; and to the Omniſcient over all his creatures? "The Lord is a God of "knowlege," * and wiſdom was with him from eternity. ‡

The pleaſures of wiſdom exceed all others, in kind, degree, and duration, far as heaven is higher than earth. "Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all "her paths are peace." † A ſtudious diſpoſition makes thoſe who are bleſſed with it valuable, good, and happy. It enables them to find a paradiſe in ſolitude, and profitably, as well as agreeably, to fill up the intervals of buſineſs. It renders them little ſenſible to the allurements of external objects, to thoſe trifles and improprieties which diſgrace the man, and degrade the Chriſtian. The ill inſtructed and unemployed are the perſons whoſe imagination is always wandering and afloat. For want of ſolid nouriſhment, their curioſity and their appetites turn to objects either vain, or dangerous; and hence proceed all thoſe inventions

* 1 Sam. ii. 3. ‡ Prov. viii. 22. Wiſdom ix. 9.
† Prov. iii. 17.

for

for ſquandering away thought and time, which generally end in a forgetfulneſs of God and ourſelves. It is incredible what inconveniences are avoided by thoſe, who can paſs their vacant hours with books, and their own thoughts. "Happy"—ſays a prelate, in his day, the admiration and delight of mankind, I mean, the all accompliſhed Archbiſhop of CAMBRAY—"Happy "they, who are diſguſted with violent pleaſures, and "know how to be pleaſed with the ſweets of an "innocent life. Happy they who delight in in-"ſtruction, and find a ſatisfaction in cultivating their "minds with knowlege. Into whatever ſituation "adverſe fortune may throw them, they always carry "entertainment with them; and the diſquiet, which "preys on others in the midſt of pleaſures, is "unknown to thoſe who can employ themſelves in "reading. Happy they, who love to read!" * Let it be added, that this happineſs is one, which as the world does not give, ſo neither can the world take away. It will never leave us, but continue a faſt and firm friend, when every other pleaſure ſhall have forſaken us. Wiſdom will comfort us in the day of ſorrow, and ſupport us in the hour of death. Like

* TELEMACHUS, B. II. See PHILLIPS on *the ſtudy of ſacred literature*, P. 172.

the

the holy ark accompanying the camp of Iſrael, ſhe will go with us over Jordan, and conduct us to our inheritance in the land of promiſe. "Exalt her," ſays the wiſe man, in the words immediately following my text—"exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee; "ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour when thou doſt "embrace her: ſhe ſhall give to thine head an "ornament of grace, a crown of glory ſhall ſhe "deliver to thee."

To a community the advantages of wiſdom are many and great. A nation glories not leſs in the learning, than in the valour, of her ſons. Long and illuſtrious is the train of literary heroes, which Britain beholds with an honeſt and conſcious pride, who from age to age have filled the moſt exalted ſtations in church and ſtate, or preſided in the different departments of ſcience, or from the ſhades of an honourable and lettered retirement, ſent forth their writings for the entertainment and inſtruction of mankind.

My younger brethren, the hope of the riſing generation, our future joy and crown, all theſe were men like yourſelves, trained in the ſame courſe of education. Think of their examples, and emulate their fame.

fame. The trophies of Miltiades, you know, would not ſuffer Themiſtocles to ſleep. Hear the author of the book of Eccleſiaſticus upon this ſubject, in a chapter read conſtantly at our univerſities, on the days appointed for a ſolemn commemoration of founders and benefactors. "Let us now praiſe famous "men, and our fathers that begat us. The Lord "hath wrought great glory by them through his great "power from the beginning. Such as did bear rule "in their kingdoms, men renowned for their power, "giving counſel by their underſtanding, and declaring "prophecies: leaders of the people by their counſels, "and by their knowlege of learning meet for the "people; wiſe and eloquent in their inſtructions. "All theſe were honoured in their generations, and "were the glory of their times. Their bodies are "buried in peace, but their name liveth for ever-"more." While the world ſhall laſt, and any regard be paid to that which deſerves regard, "the people "will tell of their wiſdom, and the congregation will "ſhew forth their praiſe." *

If therefore there be any virtue, if there be any praiſe, think on theſe things, meditate on them,

* Eccluſ. XLIV.

give

give yourſelves wholly to them. Time is on the wing. It flies, to return no more. Seize the moments as they paſs, and employ them to the beſt advantage. Loſe not the golden opportunity, the ſweet hour of prime, the morning of youth, health, and ſtrength. Conquer the difficulties at firſt ſetting out, and all will be pleaſure ever after. Labour now, and comfortable will be your reſt, when the ſeaſon of labour ſhall be over. "For glorious is the fruit of "labour, and the root of wiſdom ſhall never fall "away." * Let the ſanctity of your manners keep pace with the improvement of your minds. To your governors be reſpectful and obedient; to your companions, gentle and loving; to all, courteous and obliging. And that the divine bleſſing may be upon you in what you do, remember to begin and end your ſtudies with prayer. "If any man lack wiſdom, let "him aſk of God." † Let him aſk THAT, as the ſon of David did, and all things elſe, judged proper for him, ſhall be added to it. ‡ Pray, therefore, that God would "give you wiſdom that ſitteth by "his throne, and reject you not from among his "children: that he would ſend her out of his holy "heavens, and from the throne of his glory, that

* Wiſdom III. 15. † James I. 5. ‡ 1 Kings III. 11.

" being preſent, ſhe may labour with you, that you " may know what is pleaſing unto him. For ſhe " knoweth and underſtandeth all things, and ſhe " ſhall lead you ſoberly in your doings, and preſerve " you by her power. So ſhall your works be accepta- " ble" * in the ſight of heaven and earth, bringing glory to God, credit to your inſtructors, comfort to your friends, honour to yourſelves, and benefit to your country.

* Wiſdom ix. 4, 10, &c.

THE END.